With this issue, we arrive at the last Bulletin of 2014 and in this issue we continue presenting the new model consortium agreements for Horizon 2020. In order to support the smooth implementation of Horizon 2020, DIGITALEUROPE members have pooled their resources together and drafted a model known as MCARD-2020, whose details, particularly on intellectual property-related matters, you can read in this issue.

For those researchers involved or willing to be involved in ERC funding schemes, this issue brings an interview with Professor D. Iannuzzi, who has been able to bring a fibre-top technology to maturity, patented a fabrication method and created a start-up company with the help of a new ERC Proof of Concept Grant. Intellectual property played an important part in this process, which Professor Iannuzzi explains in the interview.

This issue is not only about EU-funded programmes. In addition to articles celebrating the 20-year anniversary of the Community trade mark system and on an essential free-of-charge tool for trade mark searches – TMview, this issue offers you some tips on intellectual property management for SMEs involved in the medical devices sector. Indeed, the European IPR Helpdesk has recently published a factsheet on the intellectual property considerations for this sector, written by Arty Rajendra and Mary Smillie, solicitors at Rouse Legal. In this issue you can read the tips that these two experts have to share with European SMEs in an interview.

As always, we also bring you a little patent quiz and information about training and events. In addition, this issue also has some fresh news on the Helpline service. Would you like to know which the hottest topics at the Helpline are? Which kind of questions we are receiving? Then do not miss this Bulletin issue.

Wishing you inspiring reading!

Your editorial team
Twenty years ago, a mere handful of employees began the job of setting up the new Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market in the seaside town of Alicante in Spain.

The Office’s job was to administer the new EU-wide unitary property right, the Community Trade Mark (CTM). Under the leadership of Jean-Claude Combaldieu, the Office’s first President, the first staff had less than two years to put everything together, ready to receive the first trade mark applications in 1996.

The CTM was designed to coexist with national and regional level intellectual property rights. It was to be valid in all EU member states, and, as new member states joined, its sphere of protection would expand too. It was a new departure for the intellectual property landscape in Europe.

The first months went by in a whirl of activity. Everything had to be done from scratch – from opening a bank account for the Office, to sourcing tables, chairs and office equipment. Staff members were essentially building an EU agency from the bottom up, from a suite of offices in Alicante city centre.

The story of how many trade marks the Office was predicted to receive – and how many it actually received – is well known. Some of the more optimistic assessments had OHIM receiving 15,000 applications in its first year of operation. By the first filing date, on April 1, 1996, the Office had already received around 22,000 applications, many of which were sent by fax. The end of the first year saw nearly 44,000 applications received.

OHIM continued to grow in the years to come. The demand for the CTM, and later for the Registered Community Design (RCD) when it was introduced in 2003, meant that the Office soon became the largest EU agency, and was entirely self-financed from revenue from fees. Fast forward twenty years, and the Office now processes applications in 23 languages of the EU, and has around 1,200 staff. Last year, OHIM received 114,000 CTM applications, the vast bulk of which were filed electronically – a far cry from the early days of faxes and post.

There have been many milestones across the past two decades. By the start of the new millennium, the Office had left its temporary headquarters in the centre of Alicante and moved into a purpose-built headquarters on the outskirts of the city, to accommodate its growing staff numbers. The great enlargement of 2004 saw OHIM’s language regime increase too, and throughout the two decades of its existence, the Office has invested heavily in e-business tools, to make e-filing of trade mark and design applications widely available.

In 2012, the EU Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights was transferred to OHIM by the Parliament and the Council, following a proposal from the Commission. Today the Office works with its EU national and regional offices partners across the EU through its Cooperation Fund (dedicated to harmonising working methods through the creation of specialised IT tools and services) and the Convergence Programme (dedicated to harmonisation of practice across the EU).

It also interacts with a wide range of European and international partners, to serve the interests of its users. It has come a long way from that small office in Alicante city centre, with just a handful of staff, which marked the start of its journey in 1994.

Commercialisation of IP - Virtual classroom lessons

Patents, trade marks, designs, trade secrets and copyright all have the potential to enhance the value of a company and can be used to generate income and protect business-critical assets. The strategic use of IP in growing businesses is presented in a range of teaching materials developed through the ip4inno project, co-ordinated by the Academy of the European Patent Office (EPO).

The EPO is now organising a series of four one-hour virtual classroom lessons covering topics from ip4inno training modules which have been specifically designed to equip companies, business advisors, TTOs and others with an understanding of intellectual property issues as they impact SMEs and new businesses.

Focussing on the commercialisation of IP, the lessons will provide valuable insights into the subject-matter. Attendees will learn how to use IP cost-effectively to maximise company value whilst minimising risks. In a market where the “open innovation” approach is becoming the norm, SMEs and RTD centres especially need to know how to compete and, at the same time, to collaborate with large companies. Only through the ability to capture their intangible assets and commercially exploit them will SMEs and RTD centres be able to meet these challenges.

For more information, a short description of the content of each lesson and to register, please visit the EPO’s online training website and see the section on “upcoming online courses”.

The trainer will be Christian Hackl, CEO of TUMTech GmbH. The fee for all four lessons is EUR 100. Participants will be given access to the recordings so that they can watch them again or catch up on any they miss.
Building the world’s biggest free trade mark database

Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM)

TMview, with 24 million trade marks from 35 countries around the world, is free, easy to use and updated daily. Online and available in 28 languages, it is a comprehensive trade mark search tool that complements a globalised marketplace.

TMview began life in OHIM in 2010 as a tool concentrated on the EU. The original idea was to incorporate trade marks from around the EU national and regional IP office network into its database, allowing for easy search among the participating offices and OHIM. 2013 saw the final EU office – Greece – enter the TMview family, but even before that high water point, the tool had already been extending itself throughout the largest trade mark offices of the world.

By August of that year, the total number of searchable trade marks was around five million. Spain had joined, bringing the total number of IP offices covered to nine – and already the tool was proving its popularity with users. During the first few months of its existence, it had already had tens of thousands of searches in its database, with users from Denmark, Italy and Spain among the most frequent visitors.

The tool grew incrementally over the next few years, adding EU national IP offices and growing in volume as it did so. But in July 2013, TMview made its first big leap beyond the EU, with the incorporation of trade marks from the Norwegian and Mexican offices. Norway and Mexico formed part of a 1.1 million increase, along with Cyprus and the EU’s newest member, Croatia.

And that was just the start. After intense work and cooperation with the Turkish Patent Office, OHIM teams were able to integrate 1 million Turkish trade marks into the tool at the start of September 2013. After Turkey came Morocco and the last member of the EU club, Greece.

At this point, the tool had over 13 million trade marks.

At the end of December 2013, TMview had its single biggest wave of integrations. The inclusion of the Russian national IP office Rospatent and the United States Patent and Trademark Office brought in 400,000 Russian marks and 6.8 million US marks, boosting TMview’s total to more than 20 million marks.

At the start of 2014, Korea became the latest office to join, with 2.7 million Korean trade marks.

This was a major milestone for the team involved in the project, as the Korean implementation was a large and complicated project, with Korean characters having to be accounted for in the integration. Thanks to the Moroccan integration, TMview is now also available in Arabic.

TMview functions as a source of business intelligence as well as a pre-clearance tool, allowing users to see what is on the market, and giving valuable information about trade marks in different economies and regions. It is updated daily by participating trade mark offices, and allows users to check the availability of their ideas for a trade mark name, find out the goods and services protected by other trade marks and to receive updates on selected trade marks for change of status, change of name and end of opposition period.

And in August of 2014, ASEAN TMview was launched. This tool is the new ASEAN online trade mark information tool, which already contains more than 2.2 million trade mark applications and registrations having effects in Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, with Myanmar and Vietnam expected to join soon.

The ASEAN TMview interface is currently available in five languages: English, Bahasa Indonesia, Khmer, Lao and Thai.

ASEAN TMview has been developed within the framework of ECAP III Phase II, the EU-ASEAN Project on Intellectual Property Cooperation, for which OHIM is the implementing agency.

Throughout the tool’s development, synergies were sought with TMview, and the tool can be accessed directly via www.asean-tmview.org or through the link in TMview itself.
Professor Iannuzzi, could you tell us briefly about your first invention and how intellectual property fitted into the ERC funding process to bring it to maturity?

One day in August 2005, a student of mine came to my office because, in his experiment on some quantum force measurements, he could not get rid of an artefact of the instrument he was using. It was to solve that specific problem that I came up with the idea of fibre-top technology. After testing the working principle with some colleagues, I realized that that idea could have had many applications well beyond what it was devised for. I thus managed to write up a patent application, which is now enforced in the US and in Europe. However, it is fair to say that the cost of fabrication of the devices that I invented were, at that time, far too high for the market. My ERC Starting Grant, which started in 2007, had the objective to bring the technology to maturity, and included an entire research chapter on the development of alternative manufacturing methods. We experimented with many approaches, and selected two as potentially competitive, which we developed further. This process allowed us to file two other patent applications. One of them was eventually withdrawn, but the other is still progressing. More importantly, we have acquired unique expertise and know-how that, eventually, helped my research group to deliver more than what was initially expected.

Further to the first ERC grant, what role has intellectual property played to obtain the proof-of-concept grant?

The proof-of-concept grant was based on the idea of further developing one of the two fabrication methods that we had elected as worth pursuing. At the moment of the application for the grant, my group was already internationally recognised as the pioneering group of a unique technology. Furthermore, we were about to start up a company based on a set of unique knowledge and expertise that we had accumulated in the previous three years of ERC research. And, of course, there was quite some evidence that my group had made the right steps as far as IP rights were concerned. It was most likely the combination of these elements that allowed me to score high in the rankings of the proposals for the proof-of-concept grant.

The outcome of this success story is the creation of a start-up. How do you see the importance of intellectual property for your company, also with the view to commercialising the fibre-top technology?

One has to distinguish between IP rights and the other softer form of IP, namely, know-how and trade secrets. IP rights are often used to keep small competitors at arm’s length, but they can be somewhat overcome by large companies having the financial capability to enter in further research and to reverse-engineer the patented technology. In addition to that, small companies or research centres do not often have the means to enforce their rights, when similar technology pops up in the market. Know-how is much more important, as long as you can make it so relevant that, at the eyes of rival companies, cooperation becomes more viable than competition. It is however important to recognise that patents and know-how are only a minor fraction of the idea-to-market process, which is a complex combination of a wide range of factors. Part of it is actually more art than science, in my opinion.

Do you have any suggestion on intellectual asset management for high-technology companies?

It is difficult to formulate a generic advice, because IP strategies strongly depend on the DNA of the company and on the characteristics of the market. I can only comment on the experience I have been having with my start-up Optics11. Our business model relies on the inimitability of the value proposition, part of which comes from the inimitability of the technical features of the products we offer. To make sure that our IP assets can sustain this approach, I sometimes find it useful to pretend to be the chief strategic officer of a company who is thinking of taking a stance in Optics11’s core market. I analyse three scenarios: copying Optics11’s products, design an alternative, or contact Optics11 to explore collaboration initiatives of some kind. If I go for the copycat approach, it means that Optics11 is not doing enough in terms of IP. If I go for the alternative design, it means that Optics11 is not doing enough in terms of innovation. If I go for the collaboration initiative, it means that we are on the right track. And, so far, we have indeed more collaborators than competitors.

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DIGITALEUROPE’s Model Consortium Agreement

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With the launch of Horizon 2020 and its first calls, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation is entering a new exciting 7-year phase. In order to support the smooth implementation of the Framework Programme, DIGITALEUROPE members have pooled their resources together and drafted a Model Consortium Agreement also known as MCARD-2020.

In the coming weeks and months, future project participants will start looking into the legal aspects of their upcoming cooperation. One major task during this period is the conclusion of the Consortium Agreement that will regulate many aspects of the relationship tying consortium members together.

A Model Consortium Agreement drafted by industry for the benefit of all.

DIGITALEUROPE is the voice of the European digital technology industry, which includes large and small companies in the Information and Communications Technology and Consumer Electronics Industry sectors. It is composed of major multinational companies and national associations from European countries. In all, DIGITALEUROPE represents more than 10,000 companies with extensive experience in publicly funded research.

Unfortunately, statistics show that throughout the last EU framework programmes there has been a steady decline of industry participation (from 39% in FP4 to 25% of projects under FP7). In line with the ambitions of Horizon 2020 to reverse this trend, MCARD-2020 hopes to foster the process of converting more research projects into products and services, by catering for considerations that are key for industry participation.

Allowing for greater collaboration between all involved parties, SMEs, large companies, and academia should help to move research results from the lab to the market and hence contribute to the overall success of the programme.

A Model Consortium Agreement rooted in experience

MCARD-2020 was drafted by a respected team of twelve lawyers who have both long standing skills and experience in the field of collaborative research and who work within research departments of DIGITALEUROPE Corporate Member Organisations and are hence close to the day-to-day issues in such projects.

This experience, encompassing FP5, FP6 and FP7 projects, indicates that Consortium Agreements, especially in the ICT field, yield similar general approaches for dealing with a number of recurring topics. In producing MCARD-2020, DIGITALEUROPE has sought to preserve the best practices learned throughout the last three framework programmes. As such, MCARD-2020 aims to simplify the process of consortium agreement negotiations by adopting the common practices of many stakeholders.

It is important to note that similarly to its predecessor – the Integrated Project Consortium Agreement (IPCA) developed by DIGITALEUROPE for FP7 – MCARD2020 offers a model which can be adapted to consortia in any scientific field, not just in the ICT domain.

A few insights into MCARD-2020

Solid management structures

Where possible MCARD-2020 re-uses management structures tried and tested in FP7 and prior projects. However, simplifications have been made wherever appropriate. In addition to the coordinator, the Executive Board is responsible for daily management of the project. The General Assembly is the highest authority in the project and makes decisions regarding fundamental and strategic issues. Every partner is represented in the General Assembly, but decision-taking will be based on the weight of each partner in the project. In some circumstances, individual partners may exercise a veto right.

Clear choices regarding IPR

MCARD-2020 caters for easy access to results which facilitates collaboration and simplifies the division of work within the consortium. Without such access, participants may tend towards caution when interacting with others in the project to avoid risking that the results of the interaction cannot be accessed.

The MCARD-2020 drafters also believe that erecting as few barriers as possible to intellectual property access best supports the exploitation of results, thereby supporting the Horizon 2020 goal of boosting the European economy. In particular, many commercial participants in publicly-funded projects are part of organisations of multiple legal entities and, if they are to ensure wide exploitation of project results, they require access, on the basis of reciprocity, for all parts of such an organisation. This approach permits participants in a project to benefit from the contributions to the project made by other participants, as well as from the know-how of affiliated entities of such participants.

Finally, MCARD-2020 also permits easy access to background and sideground technology to facilitate the use of foreground technology. DIGITALEUROPE believes that all relevant intellectual property available from other participants should be accessible (subject to reasonable and non-discriminatory conditions), whether defined as background (existing before the project) or sideground (generated after the start of the project but outside the project) if such intellectual property is necessary to exploit the results of the project, unless explicitly agreed otherwise at the start of the project. This minimises the risk that results of a project cannot be effectively exploited.
**INTRODUCTION**

Medical devices have become increasingly important in society given their impact on the health sector and also in the economy.

According to the European Commission, in 2007 the medical device and diagnostics industry employed 529,000 people across Europe. With total sales of €72.6 billion, representing 33% of world market share (€219 billion), it is the second largest market after the USA. Moreover, this sector includes almost 11,000 companies, of which 80% are SMEs. The Commission estimates that in 2007 these companies invested €5.8 billion in Research and Development (R&D) (i.e. 8% of total sales).

Intellectual property (IP) is essential to protect these investments and therefore SMEs in this sector cannot afford not to manage their IP well. With this in mind, the European IPR Helpdesk has recently published a fact sheet on IP considerations for the medical devices sector, which was developed by Arty Rajendra and Mary Smillie, solicitors at Rouse Legal.

Let’s see what these two legal experts have to say about the importance of IP in this sector!

**In your experience, how is intellectual property important for the success of SMEs doing business in the medical devices sector?**

Intellectual property rights are essential for SMEs for three reasons:

1. To attract funding and investment. This is essential if a product needs to be tested in clinical trials which can cost millions of Euros. The development time can be as long as for medicinal products, so an investor needs to know that there will be a substantial period of time during which the medical device is protected by patent(s) or design(s), and has an effective monopoly in the market to recoup the investment. An SME with good IP protection for an innovative product is often the target for a licensing deal or an acquisition by a larger company.

2. To legitimately protect your market position. Without registered IP protection in place you have few tools at your disposal against competitors copying your product and depriving you of market share.

3. To build brand equity and awareness. A good brand name will distinguish your product and build brand awareness which may continue indefinitely and even after IP protection of the design or technical features expires.

**If you had the chance to give three points of advice on IP management to an SME working in this sector, what would you say?**

1. Do not scrimp on freedom to operate searches. Carry out freedom to operate searches early and regularly during the development process; a lot of money is wasted on developing products which SMEs believe to be new but which searches reveal to already exist.

2. Spread awareness of IP and the pitfalls amongst inventors. Make sure you have procedures in place to keep information secret. Many clever inventions have lost or been deprived of patent protection because the scientists involved have enthusiastically spoken in public about their invention before the priority date of the patent or design.

3. Make sure you have funds in place for IP litigation. It is very frustrating to have your IP protection in place, find someone infringing your rights but be unable to enforce your IP against them because you don’t have the money. Similarly it is debilitating to be sued for IP infringement by a third party with an unmeritorious claim and not have the funds to defend. The costs of litigating IP rights is reducing but you need to plan how you can pay for litigation either by yourself or with the help of a litigation funder or an insurer. Don’t leave it until you want to sue or are sued.

**Can you give us some real examples of companies having overcome an obstacle in their business thanks to a professional management of IP?**

1. Good territorial protection. A company with an innovative medical device filed for extensive patent protection across several lucrative markets. The company found that it had underestimated the costs of launching its product but won angel investment on the back of its extensive patent portfolio which enabled it to manufacture and distribute its product widely.

2. Customs protection. A very successful and market leading medical device became the target of counterfeiters. Counterfeits were pouring into the EU from India. The quantities were high enough to materially affect market share but the main concerns for the company were the safety of consumers and tarnishing of its brand. The company quickly put in place effective customs protection so that the majority of the counterfeits were stopped before they reached the marketplace, thus limiting commercial and reputational damage.

3. Dual patent and design protection. A company with what it believed to be an innovative medical device found a competitor copying its product. It had...
INTERVIEW

put in place patent and design protection and enforced both against the competitor. The patent was found invalid because it did not involve an inventive step and therefore could not be used to prevent the infringement. However, the design was found to be valid and infringed, thus enabling the company to force the competitor product off the market.

Design protection seems to be essential for SMEs doing business in this sector. Do you think that the current Community rights framework has facilitated the access of SMEs to this type of IP protection?

The Community designs regime underwent a radical overhaul in 2002. The costs and time needed to obtain design protection reduced significantly. This has enabled SMEs to take advantage of community-wide design protection much more easily. There are still problems such as a limited ability to search registered designs and therefore effectively clear the path, and the plethora of invalid designs on the register, but overall the system is a good and effective one which SMEs should certainly take advantage of.

ROUSE

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The European IPR Helpdesk on Tour: Take a Look at a Selection of our Recent Events

The world is turning and during the last 3 months the European IPR Helpdesk Team had the chance to be a part of several selected IP events which were organized in various places all over Europe offering wide-ranging thematic orientations. In addition the training team provided several IP workshops building capacities in IP management among SMEs and researchers. Here a bunch of our recent events:
The European IPR Helpdesk Helpline answers your questions concerning intellectual property (IP) within three working days.

You get practical first-line support directly from our IP experts and free-of-charge.

If you are curious about the type of IP queries the Helpline is currently dealing the most, these are shown in the illustration on the right.

If you would like to talk to one of the IP experts of our helpline, please dial +352 - 25 22 33 – 333

www.iprhelpdesk.eu/helpline

Your IPR queries matter to us: Ask the Helpline

EU SMEs involved in transnational activities

What aspects should I consider for my trade mark strategy?

What IP protection applies to my website?

IP in EU-funded projects

How to address IP in the project proposal?

How to deal with partner organisations in MSCA?

How to ensure confidentiality at the proposal stage?

Frequently Asked Questions received at the Helpline

What does the expression “patent pending” mean?

The meaning of the expression “Patent Pending” varies depending on the national law of each country. However, in principle this term is used in reference to:

- the legal status of a patent application – “notice given (by the relevant intellectual property office) that an application for a patent has been filed and that legal protection (including retroactive rights) may be forthcoming” – source: EPO

- a warning notice that is affixed in products to inform the public that an application for a patent on that product was filed and to ward off potential infringers; even if not compulsory, such a notice can be particularly relevant in court infringement proceedings. On the other side, in most countries you are allowed to apply the term “patent pending” to a product only if there is, in fact, a pending patent application. If a product is marked with “patent pending” when there is no associated patent application, most national laws in the EU countries sanction this behaviour - usually under competition law and/or patent law.

Our organisation will take part in a Horizon 2020 project as a beneficiary and we intend to subcontract some of our tasks to third parties. What will be their rights over the results?

In Horizon 2020, third parties do not sign the grant agreement and consequently are not project beneficiaries – for this reason, they do not have any “automatic” rights to the results under the grant agreement, according to which results are owned by the beneficiary generating them.

Furthermore, when resorting to third parties to carry out tasks under the action, and in the case where these third parties are entitled to claim rights over the results, the beneficiary concerned should make sure that it complies with its own obligations under the grant agreement. This means getting all the necessary rights from these third parties beforehand. This can be done by way of a transfer (assignment agreement) from the subcontractor to the beneficiary. Alternatively, this can also be done by way of a licence granted to this beneficiary over the subcontracted work. A licence should however be broad enough to allow the beneficiary to grant access rights – this means that it should include a right to sublicense. Such arrangements (transfer or licence) have to be made upon the signature of the subcontracting agreement.

The grant agreement therefore allows some flexibility on this topic and the ownership of certain project results can be left to the subcontractor, as long as the beneficiary is granted all the rights necessary for the implementation of the project and the exploitation of the results, in line with the grant agreement.
From invention to innovation - Strategies for the successful exploitation of H2020 results: Oxford 11th-12th September 2014

European IPR Helpdesk Training Team

The European IPR Helpdesk is proud to announce that the second large training event of 2014, “From invention to innovation - Strategies for successful exploitation of Horizon 2020 results” has taken place in Oxford, at the Oxford Brookes University, Wheatley Campus.

On Thursday 11th and Friday 12th of September, the Training Team of the European IPR Helpdesk had the pleasure of welcoming more than 70 participants interested in topics such as intellectual property (IP) in Horizon 2020, Technology Transfer and, most importantly, the role of IP in business. Also on this occasion our training sessions have proven to be very international, counting people from all over Europe, from Italy to Sweden, from Spain to Norway, giving to all those present a great opportunity for networking, meeting and exchanging ideas with experts from the same field, besides increasing their knowledge about IP.

We certainly owe a great thank you to those without whom all of this would have not been possible. First of all, to each and every brilliant speaker that accepted our invitation to Oxford, namely: Dr Tim Cook, Oxford Gene Technology; Prof. Alistair Fitt, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange; Dr Robert Harrison, Patent attorney at 24 IP Law Group; Mr Jörg Scherer, CEO of Eurice GmbH and Head of Training of the European IPR Helpdesk; Ms Triin Udris, EEN Oxford, and especially to Dr Eugene Sweeney, CEO of Iambic Innovation Ltd who has been on our side from the very beginning of the event preparation, not only providing us with his deep knowledge of IP but also being our reference point for many organisational issues.

Moreover, we cannot forget all the representatives from Brookes University, Prof. Gareth Neighbour, Head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Mathematical Science and Dr Nigel Crook, Head of the Department of Computing and Communication Technologies, who reserved for our conference the wonderful auditorium that perfectly suited the needs of speakers and participants, allowing always a high level of attention and interest.

The event in Oxford also proved to be very successful concerning the expectations of the participants and their opinions on our feedback forms. In fact not only was every single one of them happy with the organisation and the tuition, but all of them answered that they would suggest the event to a colleague or somebody in their field of work.

We sincerely hope that our services gave them the chance to learn useful information that they will exploit in the most productive way in their jobs. This, in our mind and in our project, is the best way that we can contribute to the European innovation process. For this reason we will keep on organising our training events, having scheduled as our next destination Budapest. This is going to be our final large IP event in 2014 and will be the concluding piece of our training session: “From invention to innovation – Strategies for successful exploitation of Horizon 2020 results”.

Finally, for everyone who missed our Oxford event we are happy to announce the availability of all presentations in the form of an eClip soon on our website, and furthermore that the registrations for the above upcoming event in Budapest will open soon on our website.

So please take a look to the website and subscribe to our newsletter, in order to always be up-to-date with the most important events involving the Helpdesk and therefore innovation and IP in Europe.

Fancy a little quiz?

As you know in every issue we include a quiz to help you develop your patent searching skills using Espacenet. Why don’t you try using Espacenet today? Here comes our new quiz:

QUIZ

This smell wakes me up

Recently Guillaume Rolland, a 17-year-old French student made the headlines as being one of the finalists of the Google Science Fair with an interesting invention: the Olfactory Awakening alarm clock. This alarm clock sends out various scents in the morning, prompting the sleeper to get up, and is particularly adapted to hearing impaired people.

Try finding patents covering such alarm clocks using Espacenet.
An electric car you never plug in

Some hesitate buying an electric car because of the cumbersome, frequent and lengthy charging process. As with any problem in life, inventors come with innovative ways to solve them. If we integrate powered transmitting coils into roadways, electric cars equipped with receiving coils could charge their batteries themselves during their road trip. This type of charging process can also be used for public transport vehicles. Try finding how extensively this field has been patented using Espacenet.

**Step one:** To find similar patents, identify the most pertinent aspects of the invention – common technical features that may be found in related patents – and for each aspect, define a comprehensive set of synonyms. To perform the search, the following concepts – groups of synonyms covering the different aspects of the invention – can be defined:

- electric*
- car vehicle*
- charg* recharg* induct* coil* road embed* underground integrat*

The combination electric* car road charg* induct* yields an interesting list of documents.

**Step two:** Use the classification assigned to relevant documents to refine and complete the search.

One classification symbol looks particularly relevant - B60L11/182 relating to charging electrical vehicles by inductive energy transfer. Another symbol, so called Y symbols used for new technologies, is equally relevant - Y02T90/122 electric charging stations by inductive energy transmission.

Using “or” combining both symbols, one obtains about 3,000 patent records. This set can be reduced to patents relating to such charging station embedded in roads. Combining those 3,000 records with road* one obtains about 190 records almost all covering this type of technology. Some examples are shown below:

**WO201013162431 (A1) - CHARGING OF VEHICLES ON A ROAD**

**US2013214706 (A1) - Apparatus and Method for Inductive Power Transfer on an Electrified Roadway Using a Rotating Secondary Inductor**

**US2013154553 (A1) - Wireless Automated Vehicle Energizing System**

From this list, one can easily see that the field is very heavily patented. This is not really surprising as this is a technology that can represent huge progress regarding the usability of electrical cars. Interestingly, a Korean university, KAIST, is quite active in this field and a bus using this technology has already being released.
The European IPR Helpdesk is managed by the European Commission’s Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME), with policy guidance provided by the European Commission’s Enterprise and Industry Directorate - General. Even though this bulletin has been developed with the financial support of the EU, the positions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of EASME or the European Commission. Neither EASME nor the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the EASME or the European Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of this information.

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Disclaimer / Legal Notice

Glossary

Unregistered Community Design is a form of protection for industrial designs fulfilling the conditions of protection – novelty and individual character. The protection lasts for a period of three years and is acquired through the first disclosure or use in trade of a design within the European Union. The Unregistered Community Design constitutes a right to prevent the commercial use of the design only if the use results from copying.

*TMview* is an online trade mark database that is free, easy to use and updated daily. It enables users to check the availability of their idea for a trade mark, find out the goods and services protected by competitors’ trade marks and receive updates on selected trade marks.

Editorial Board

The following members have actively participated to the shaping of the current Bulletin.

**External members**

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